



Appropriations Update

Committee on the Budget • Majority Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives
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INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004 – H.R. 2691

SUMMARY

The Interior appropriations bill reported to the House on 10 July 2003 (H.R. 2691; H.Rept. 108-195) provides new budget authority equal to the 302(b) suballocation for the Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies. The bill is consistent with the House budget resolution for fiscal year 2004 (H.Con.Res. 95).

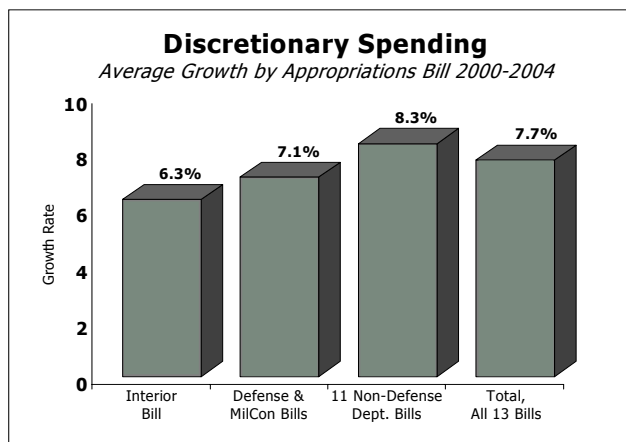
The bill designates two transfers of funds as emergencies, with the intent of exempting them from limits in the concurrent resolution on the budget. The designations have no budgetary effect, but they do technically violate the Congressional Budget Act because they are under the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Budget.

COST OF THE LEGISLATION

H.R. 2691 provides \$19.627 billion in new budget authority [BA] and \$19.400 billion in outlays for 2004 – an increase of \$164 million in BA and \$1.067 billion in outlays from fiscal year 2003 (see Table 1 on the next page). BA increases by 0.8 percent from the previous year, and is \$72 million above the President's request.

As shown in the chart alongside, assuming enactment of this bill, new BA for the Interior bill will have increased an average of 6.3 percent a year in the 2000-04 period. This rate of growth is lower than that of the appropriations bills for the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies, and is 1.4 percentage points below that of discretionary spending as a whole.

The bill contains \$136 million in BA savings. The savings include \$30 million in budget authority, with no related outlays, from changes in mandatory spending; \$20 million in rescissions of previously enacted budget authority, with \$1 million in related outlays; and \$86 million in a program deferral.



The bill does not provide new appropriations designated as emergencies. It does not fund the administration's request for fiscal year 2003 supplemental spending for wildland fire management programs normally funded in this bill. It does provide \$36 million in BA and outlays for advance appropriations.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE BUDGET RESOLUTION

The bill complies with sections 302(f) and 311(a) of the Budget Act. The first of these prohibits consideration of

bills in excess of a subcommittee's 302(b) allocation for new budget authority. The second, section 311(a), prohibits

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consideration of legislation exceeding the aggregate levels of BA and outlays established in the budget resolution.

The \$19.627 billion in new discretionary budget authority is the same as the 302(b) allocation to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior; outlays are also equal to the allocation. Because no appropriations bills for fiscal year 2004 have been enacted, there is ample room under the BA ceiling and hence the bill would not violate section 311(a).

The bill provides \$36 million in fiscal year 2005 BA for the Elk Hills School Lands Fund. This advance appropriation is included on the list of programs eligible to receive them, so is exempt from the prohibition on advance appropriations established in section 501 of the budget resolution.

The bill designates as an emergency two transfers – one for the emergency replacement of property owned by the Department, the other for combating wildfires on Department land – with the intent of exempting the costs from the budget resolution. Such designations are unnecessary because the transfers will not change the total amount of appropriated BA. Even had there been a cost associated with these provisions, the language as written exempted them from the now-expired statutory spending caps, not from the budget resolution; hence the budget resolution limits would still have applied.

The emergency designations do, however, violate section 306 of the Budget Act, which prohibits the consideration of emergency designations and other measures within the jurisdiction of the Budget Committee.

Table 1: Interior Appropriations Bill
(fiscal years; millions of dollars)

	2003 Spending ^a	Administration 2004	302 (b) for 2004	Bill
Budget Authority	19,463	19,555	19,627	19,627
Outlays	18,333	19,268	19,400	19,400

^a Does not include \$9 million in BA and \$7 million in outlays included in the fiscal year 2003 Iraq conflict supplemental (Public Law 108-11).

Table 2: Discretionary Spending in the Interior Appropriations Bill
(in millions of dollars)

	2003 Budget Authority ^a	2003 Outlays ^a	2004 Budget Authority	2004 Outlays	Difference BA	Difference Outlays
Interior	9,524	9,069	9,602	9,647	78	578
<i>Bureau of Land Management</i>	1,820	1,696	1,675	1,745	-145	49
<i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife</i>	1,244	1,161	1,297	1,213	53	52
<i>National Park Service</i>	2,232	2,192	2,238	2,308	6	116
<i>Bureau of Indian Affairs</i>	2,266	2,103	2,335	2,305	69	202
<i>Other Interior</i>	1,962	1,917	2,057	2,076	95	159
Agriculture - Forest Service	4,292	3,631	4,183	3,938	-109	307
Energy	1,781	1,730	1,809	1,830	28	100
HHS - Indian Health Services	2,850	2,856	2,949	2,925	99	69
Other	1,016	1,047	1,084	1,060	68	13
Total	19,463	18,333	19,627	19,400	164	1,067

^a Does not include \$9 million in BA and \$7 million in outlays included in the fiscal year 2003 Iraq conflict supplemental (Public Law 108-11).

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DISCUSSION

The bill provides BA that is \$164 million higher than 2003 spending (see Table 2 on the previous page).

Compared to 2003, the spending for the Department of Interior increases by a net \$78 million. Increases in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (\$69 million), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (\$53 million), the National Park Service (\$6 million), and other Interior activities (\$95 million, including \$80 million for the Special Trustee), are partly offset by a decrease in the Bureau of Land Management (\$145 million). The decrease is due largely to a reduction in wildland fire management (\$140 million). (Wildland fire management also receives funding through the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, as described below.)

Spending for the Forest Service decreases by a net of \$109 million. Reductions are made in land acquisition (\$122 million), capital improvement (\$119 million), State and private forestry (\$72 million), working capital (\$30 million), and other (\$20 million). These reductions are partly offset by an increase in wildland fire management (\$254 million).

Spending for the Department of Energy's Energy Programs increases by \$28 million; the Department of Health and

Human Services' Indian Health Services spending increases by \$99 million.

Other spending in the bill increases by \$68 million due to increases for the Smithsonian Institution (\$49 million), the National Endowment for the Humanities (\$12 million), and other activities (\$7 million).

Relative to the President's request, the bill increases BA by a net of \$72 million. These relative increases appear in the Forest Service (\$123 million, largely due to an \$83-million increase in wildland fire management), Indian Health Services (\$60 million), and other activities (\$7 million). These are offset by reductions in the Departments of Energy (\$18 million) and Interior (\$100 million).

The Interior reductions relative to the President's request include reductions in the National Park Service (\$124 million), largely due to land acquisition (\$116 million). Other reductions include the Bureau of Land Management (\$3 million), and other activities (\$5 million). These Department of Interior reductions are partly offset by increases in Bureau of Indian Affairs (\$21 million), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (\$11 million).

OFFSETS

Changes in Mandatory Programs. The bill contains changes to one mandatory program – a program not subject to annual appropriations – that generates savings to offset discretionary spending.

The bill reduces a mandatory National Park Service land acquisition account by \$30 million in BA, with no related outlays. If the provisions were stricken, the bill would exceed its allocation under section 302(b) of the Budget Act.

Rescissions. The bill rescinds \$20 million worth of previously enacted BA in the Department of Interior's working capital fund. Outlay savings are \$1 million.

Deferral. The bill defers \$86 million in BA for the Department of Energy's clean coal technology program. The deferral moves the availability of those funds – which will not be required for obligation in fiscal year 2004 – into fiscal year 2005.